

II. REMARKS

Claims 1-30 are pending in this application. By this Response, Applicant elects Group II (claims 9-25 and 27-30). Prompt examination on the merits is respectfully requested.

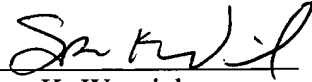
In the Restriction Requirement, the Office asserts that the filter unit of claims 1-8 and 26 (Group I) and the filter system of claims 9-25 and 27-30 (Group II) are distinct inventions. Specifically, the Office asserts that the filter unit and filter system have separate utilities, the filter unit being capable of catalytically removing nitrogen oxide from exhaust gas and the filter system being capable of removing soot particles from exhaust gas.

Applicant submits that the subject matter of Groups I (claims 1-8 and 26) and II (claims 9-25 and 27-30) are sufficiently related that a thorough search for the subject matter of the Group II invention would encompass a search for the subject matter of the Group I invention.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the search and examination of Group II will encompass all of the subject matter of Group I, and thus a search for both Groups could be made without serious burden. See MPEP § 803, in which it is stated: "if the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the Examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to distinct or independent inventions." It is respectfully submitted that this policy should apply in the present application in order to avoid unnecessary delay and expense to Applicant and duplicative examining by the Office.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the Restriction Requirement between Groups I and II. Should the Examiner require anything further from Applicants, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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